

CONSOLIDATION OF ALL COUNTY POOR FARMS PROPOSED

One Institution for Each of Six Congressional Districts in State Urged.

Defective, delinquent children have, in some cases, been kept at county poor farms in order that the attendance would be large enough to meet the district school requirements and keep the school open. This is one of the startling facts brought to light in the investigation of conditions in West Virginia by the Child Welfare Commission, of which Mrs. James A. Meredith, of this city, is a member. And it is one of the facts upon which the commission is basing its argument in favor of the consolidation of the county poor farms in the state into six consolidated poor farms, one for each congressional district. But that is not the only reason.

For the last nine months the commission has been making a study of the poor farms of the state and it has found that the county homes are being maintained in a large majority of cases for an "appalling" number of inmates. In the language of Miss Hettie Hazlett, executive secretary of the commission, "This means," Miss Hazlett said in a recent letter to county authorities throughout the state, "a large investment for the county in land, houses, barns, equipment, etc., to say nothing of the per capita cost which varies from \$50 to \$600."

"The commission," she said, "is considering a plan by which these poor farms may be consolidated, having only one for each congressional district. Under this plan the presidents of the county county of the counties constituting the congressional district and the State Board of Control would form a board of managers for the district home."

"The attached chart," she continued, "will show you the situation at the present time worked out on the congressional district basis, showing the rooms, inmates, approximate value based on the number of acres, the value per acre and the value of the household equipment. Notice the number of inmates in relation to the number of rooms, the actual number of inmates exceeding the number of inmates. Under the plan suggested by a local board of managers there would be six homes in the state which would adequately and in an efficient, economical manner under sanitary conditions, care for our helpless, aged and indigent."

By personal investigation of certain poor farms, Miss Hazlett collected a great deal of data that convinced the child welfare commission that radical changes must be made in the administration of the laws and the institution created or established for the benefit of the poor, before this group of unfortunates can be properly cared for.

Conditions existing in some of the county farms are indicated in Miss Hazlett's report of the poor farms. One farm was described as follows:

The farm was supposed to contain eighty acres, but there was only a small area and the land was worth cultivating. On this farm are two buildings, the one reserved for the inmates with room for fourteen or sixteen persons. The present number of inmates more than twenty, the condition of each of whom is described in the report. The condition of each is described in brief notes as follows:

Patients Described.
No. 1, old age and tuberculosis; No. 2, feeble minded; Nos. 4, 5 and 6, three children, all having colic; No. 9, "No mind at all"; No. 10, old age; No. 11, old age and paralysis; No. 12, old age and feeble minded; No. 13, inmate for fourteen years, nervous complaint, mentally deranged, complained bitterly of her nerves and conditions, as she applied to boy's leg. This boy, who is No. 14, is 9 years old and is in the imbecile class with files crawling over his face and not registering enough sensation on his brain to make him brush them off. Sores on his feet and legs, some healed with hard scabs and others open.

No. 15 is an old woman in the same room with Nos. 13 and 14. She is hopelessly feeble minded, with pathetic eyes and a silly grin. She kept asking the investigator who she was and if she had seen anybody the old woman knew.

No. 16, an attractive girl of 12, weighing about sixty pounds and has had adenoids and tonsils. She and a younger brother sleep in one room with two double beds with another boy, No. 19, a feeble minded youth and delinquent, who had been committed to an industrial school but hadn't been sent. The room in which these four inmates slept was described as being in a frightful condition, mattresses wet and filthy.

No. 20, an incorrigible girl, who, the superintendent said should be sent to the reform school. She is not sent because the attendance of the district school had to be large enough so that the normal children could have some place to go to school.

No comment was made about No. 21, a woman, but No. 22, has heart trouble. His son, No. 23, about 5 years old, is not of normal size; he looked about 2. There also was a baby with bad sores along neck and hair.

In this poor house there was one bath tub, not connected or used, and two toilets, one of which was out of commission.

General conditions are thus briefly described: "Filth, disease, sordidness and sordidness crowding human beings who have been swept into the rubbish ap of the county poor farm."

And of the care taker the report

said: "Was complaining of the way the county court crowded people in on her and of the inability to get help, saying she was not able to do it all herself, and indeed she was not."

Opposed in Harrison County.
And so the story goes in other counties. Of course, there are exceptions to the rule, and the president of at least one county court, Dorsey W. Cork of Harrison County, is opposed to the proposed plan for the consolidation of county poor farms in six district poor farms. Mr. Cork, in a letter to the Child Welfare Commission, which was published in a Clarksburg newspaper, on the basis that the Harrison County farm is in excellent shape and has unusual facilities for caring for the indigent. Attention may be called to the fact, however, that the Harrison County poor farm being the best in the Third Congressional District, there is a possibility that it may be chosen for the district farm, in case the plan of the commission is approved by the legislature.

Emphasis is placed on the fact that under the district farm plan, the farms will be district and in no way, state institutions, the control being in the hands of the board of managers which is made up largely of local people.

Careful comparison of statistics of the poor farms of the various counties has convinced the members of the child welfare commission that the plan they propose would provide the most efficient method for the adequate care of the poor of the state and thereby promote the welfare of a large percentage of the children of West Virginia.

One of the larger poor farms of the state containing 393 acres, the investigation shows, was bought for \$115,000 and the improvements have cost \$90,000. On this farm are seventy-six persons, including twenty-four women. Eight out of ten, the report says, are feeble minded. Twenty per cent are infected with venereal disease. One inmate an elderly woman, the report says, is insane and badly diseased, part of her nose and cheek having been eaten away. She is a violent patient and has to be kept under lock and key.

The superintendent of this farm said that at least one half the inmates had relatives who could care for them if they wanted to. The average per capita cost at this institution is estimated to be \$360 per year or between \$25 and \$30 a month.

At this institution, however, there is a fine hot house filled with flowers and vegetables, in charge of a florist with two helpers. The products of the farm in one season included 125 tons of hay and \$3,000 worth of vegetables and flowers sold. These reports describe one of the best and one of

the worst poor farms in West Virginia.

Statistics Compiled.
Statistics compiled by the Child Welfare Commission show that the poor farms of the entire state have a total of 10,056 acres; the buildings a total of 443 rooms, housing 237 inmates with 175 children. The total value of the poor farms is estimated to be \$374,000.

The figures for the Sixth Congressional District, which includes Kanawha, Boone, Fayette, Raleigh, Greenbrier and Pocahontas counties, are as follows: Acres, 944; rooms, 61; inmates, 141; children, 24; value, \$99,000.

Figures for other districts are as follows:

First—Acres, 1,360; rooms, 153; inmates, 170; children, 20; value, \$205,800.

Second—Acres, 2,353; rooms, 223; inmates, 156; children, 23; value of property, \$286,900.

Third—Acres, 1,603; rooms, 119; inmates, 152; children, 70; value \$95,000.

Fourth—Acres, 1,651; rooms, 203; inmates, 117; children, 15; value of property, \$96,000.

Fifth—Acres, 1,245; rooms, 35; inmates, 101; children, 23; value of property, \$94,500.

Eight counties in West Virginia do not own poor farms and take care of their paupers through contracts with private agencies. These counties include Brooke County in the First Congressional District; Pendleton in the Second; Clay and Nicholas in the Third; Weyburn and Summers in the Fifth; Fayette and Pocahontas in the Sixth.

The figures compiled on the Kanawha County farm are as follows: Acres, 240; value per acre, \$200; number of rooms, 34; approximate investment, \$60,350; yearly cost, \$20,000; total number of inmates at the time of the report, 94.

The figures for Boone County are: Acres, 90; value per acre, \$30.00; number of rooms, four; approximate investment, \$3,200; per capita cost, \$250; toilets, 2; inmates, 7; occupants, not inmates, 5.

In Barbour County, the poor house with thirty rooms, has only two inmates. It is on a farm of 170 acres and the approximate amount of money invested is \$10,340.

Roane County has \$18,900 invested in its poor farm with only four inmates. It has a 337 acre farm, valued at \$60 an acre.

Pleasants County has only three Third—Acres, 1,603; rooms, 119; on a farm of eighty-five acres, valued at \$70 an acre. The total investment for this purpose is \$8,725 and the per capita cost of caring for the three inmates is \$345 a year.

Lincoln County has \$18,170 invested, yet it has only nine paupers lodged in eight rooms on a 383 acre farm.

On the 175 acre poor farm of Wood County are buildings contain-

ing eighty rooms. Yet the number of paupers is only twenty-four and the number of occupants who are not paupers is eleven.

Five paupers are lodged in four rooms in Mason County, where the total investment in the 197 acre farm is \$7,080.

The largest poor farm in the state is in Greenbrier County where a farm of 560 acres has been set aside for this purpose. On this farm, sixteen paupers are lodged in five rooms. There are also ten occupants who are not inmates. The total investment here is \$13,052.

The two paupers of Morgan County have eighteen rooms on a farm of forty-seven and one-half acres. The total investment is \$3,872. Three persons on the farm are not paupers.

Randolph County with three paupers has \$13,100 invested in a poor farm of 117 acres and an eight room house.

In Doddridge County, \$13,000 is invested in a 200 acre poor farm for the benefit of three paupers lodged in twelve rooms.

DEEP VALLEY

Mrs. Kate Riggs is ill with pneumonia fever at present.

Mrs. Nora Robinson is doing some quilting work for Mrs. Jimmie Thon.

Mrs. Della Kilcoin is employed at the home of George Sturm.

Denzel Huey left here recently for Gilmer County where he will be employed for several days by Morse Spencer.

Mrs. Denzel Huey and daughter Bernice are visiting friends in Fairmont.

Otis Gump and Orin Baker are employed at Bellairs, Ohio.

Bill Baker visited his uncle, V. L. Baker, Sunday.

Gas lines are being installed in this community from a main connected with a Fairmont company.

V. L. Baker visited in Morgantown last week.

A Christmas program will be given in the West School Friday afternoon under the direction of the teacher, Miss Helen Phillips.

Miss Grace Baker, who was seriously ill here at the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. V. L. Baker, recently, has returned to Morgantown.

Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Stump and son Eugene have returned to Morgantown after a few days' visit with the latter's parents, Mr. and Mrs. V. L. Baker.

Miss Emma Floyd is the guest of her father, D. L. Floyd at Grant Town.

Demer Hays is recovering after a recent serious illness.

William Loudenslager has returned here after a recent visit to Morgantown.

Mrs. Sarah Baker assisted Mrs. Nora Robinson with some quilting work one evening this week.

OIL PRODUCTION SHOWS INCREASE

Decrease Reported East of Rockies and Increase in California.

NEW YORK, Dec. 21.—Gross domestic pipe line and tank farm crude oil stocks in the United States increased 258,000 barrels in the month of November, according to figures compiled by the American Petroleum Institute. East of the Rockies, there was a decrease of 933,000 barrels and in California an increase of 1,191,000 barrels, making a net increase of 258,000 barrels.

The daily average gross crude oil production of the United States increased 34,350 barrels for the week ending December 16, totalling 1,632,600 barrels, as compared with 1,597,750 barrels for the preceding week, according to the weekly summary of the institute. The daily average production east of the Rocky Mountains was 1,202,600 barrels as compared with 1,187,750 barrels, an increase of 14,850 barrels.

No changes were reported in crude oil prices for the major districts—Mid-Continent crude oil being quoted at 90 cents to \$1.80 a barrel, according to the gravity of the oil, Pennsylvania at \$3 a barrel and Gulf Coast at \$1.25.

According to figures collected by the American Petroleum Institute, imports of petroleum "crude and refined oils" at the principal United States ports for the week ending December 16, totalling 1,618,165 barrels, a daily average of 231,367 barrels, compared with 2,539,819 barrels, a daily average of 362,831 barrels for the week ending December 9.

ENFORCE PROHIBITION

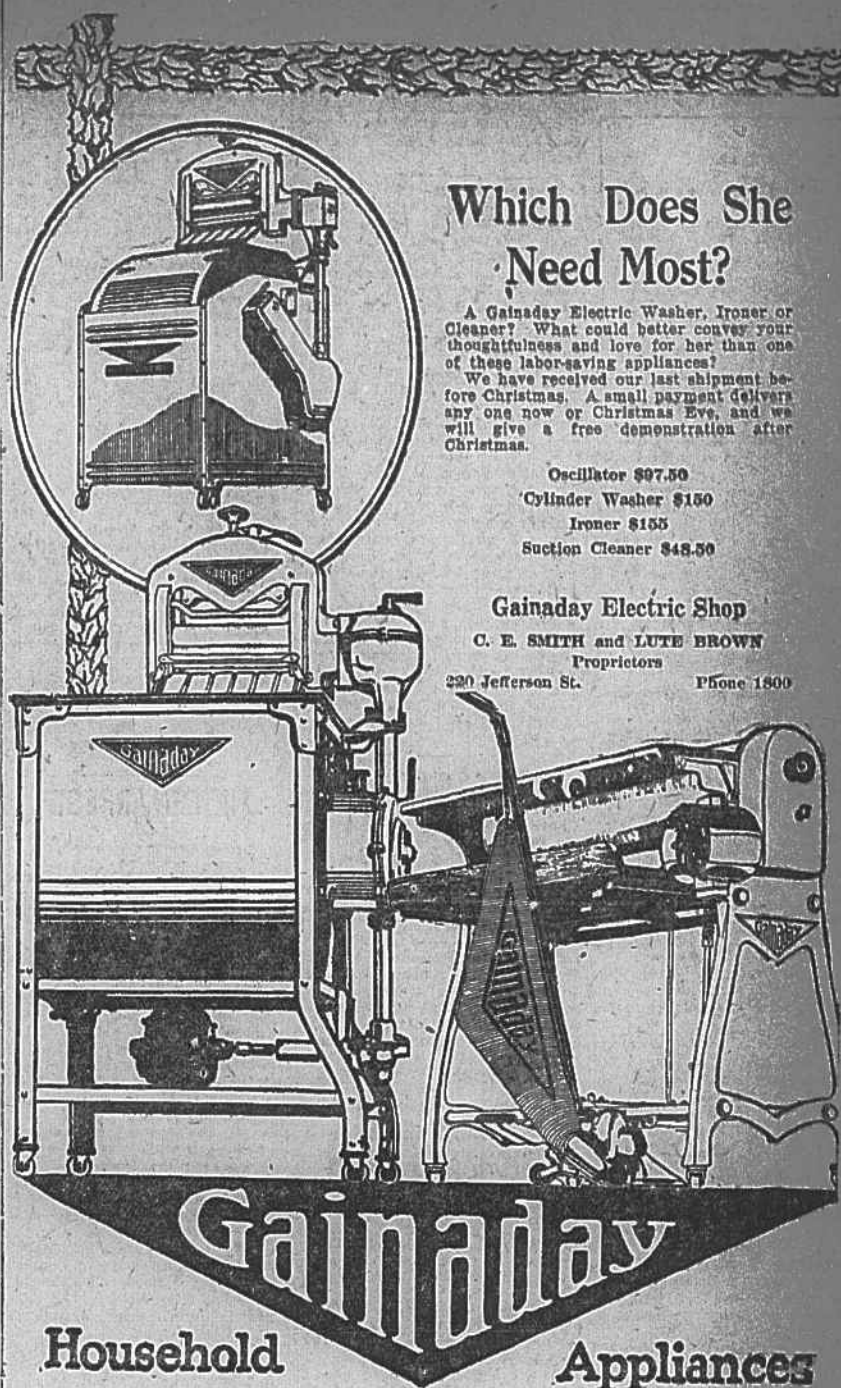
WARSAW, Dec. 21.—(By The Associated Press.)—The government has given orders that prohibition be strictly enforced, until the funeral of the late President Narutowicz on Friday. The body of the assassinated chief executive will be temporarily buried in Warsaw Cathedral.

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\$6 Boys' Storm Shoes with buckles \$3.95	\$6.00 Girls' Fine Dress Shoes \$3.95
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